574 609 277 any expectation of payment. Being almost destitute of tobacco for our journey, he gave us some of their own manufacture. As that herb is not yet arrived at maturity, they use only the blossoms [402] at present. These are collected as required, dried before the fire on a fragment of an earthen pot, and smoked by all the natives. But I find the flowers a very poor substitute for our own tobacco—a nauseous, insipid weed. The ripe leaf is somewhat better, but even that is mere trash, possessed of neither strength nor virtue.

648 [491] [137] [403] We soon after took the road, bidding a final adieu to the Mandanes. The road through the wood was very muddy and bad. We found amazing quantities of poires, perfectly ripe. The natives here are so surrounded by their different enemies at all seasons, and particularly when the fruit is ripe, that the women dare not leave the villages to gather it, though there is a great plenty of chokecherries, cerises, etc. Even when they go out to hoe their corn, young men, well armed, keep on the rounds at short distances from the women to prevent surprise from an enemy. This is a necessary precaution, as they have frequently been attacked while working in the fields. The village on the N. side lies under a double disadvantage, surrounded by thick woods for nearly two miles upon the land side, and having close by a vast quantity of young sprouts and brushwood, enabling an enemy to approach very near without being discovered. A single Sioux has been known to secrete himself for several days among those bushes until a favorable opportunity has offered, when he has dispatched a Mandane, and got away with the scalp.

[p. 384 [I]]